DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2013 PSA # 13-32

Squirrel Tests Positive for West Nile Virus in Big Bear Lake

San Bernardino: The state laboratory confirmed today that a dead gray tree squirrel collected on July 9, 2013 in Big Bear Lake tested positive for West Nile Virus. This is the first positive indicator of West Nile Virus in 2013 in the area served by the County of San Bernardino's Mosquito and Vector Control Program. The program conducts active surveillance on vector-borne diseases, and monitors and treats all known water sources where mosquito breeding may occur.

The California Department of Public Health encourages the public to participate in the West Nile Virus surveillance program by reporting dead birds or squirrels to the State West Nile Virus toll-free hotline at (877) WNV-BIRD, or online at www.westnile.ca.gov.

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in unmaintained green pools and can fly up to 1.5 miles per hour, potentially transmitting the virus and impacting entire neighborhoods. Property owners with pools are encouraged to keep them clean. Please report green pools and other sources of mosquito breeding to the County of San Bernardino's Mosquito and Vector Control Program at (800) 442-2283.

San Bernardino County residents can protect themselves and their families from West Nile Virus by taking these precautions:

- Drain or Dump Remove all standing water around your property where mosquitos lay eggs such as birdbaths, green swimming pools, ponds, old tires, buckets, clogged gutters, or even puddles from leaky sprinklers.
- **Dawn and Dusk** Avoid spending time outside when mosquitos are most active.
- Dress Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeved shirts that are loose-fitting and light-colored.
- **DEET** Apply insect repellent containing DEET according to manufacturer's directions.
- Doors Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes to prevent mosquitos from entering your home.

Horses are susceptible to West Nile Virus. A vaccine is available for horses; horse owners are advised to contact their veterinarians about vaccinations.

For more information, contact the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health Services at (800) 442-2283 or visit our website at www.sbcounty.gov/dph/dehs.

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